

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

141018Z Sep 00

2000HANOI02047 - UNCLASSIFIED

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ACTION EAP-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00
	FBIE-00	UTED-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	VCE-00
	NSAE-00	OIC-02	SSO-00	SS-00	USIE-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02
	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/004W				

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FM AMEMBASSY HANOI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0844
INFO ASEAN COLLECTIVE
USMISSION GENEVA
RUEHBJAMEMBASSY BEIJING 3853
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
SECDEF WASHDC
NSC WASHDC
JOINT STAFF WASHDC
SECDEF WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//J5/FPA/JTF-FA//

UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 04 HANOI 002047

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

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DEPT FOR EAP/BCLTV, DRL, DRL/IRF, INR/B AND IO
STATE ALSO FOR EAP/PD/DKIRCHOFFER
GENEVA FOR HRC
NSC FOR RAVIC HUSO
USCINCPAC FOR FPA
SECDEF ALSO FOR ISA/EA/LSTERN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PHUM KIRF](#) [KPAO PREL](#) [PGOV VM](#) [UNGA](#) [HUMANR](#) [RELFREE](#)
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH THICH THAI HOA

RECEIVED INVITATIONS ABOUT ONE MONTH BEFORE THE SUMMIT FROM VIETNAM'S UN MISSION. THEY THEN WENT THROUGH FORMAL GVN APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR APPROVAL OF TRAVEL FOR RELIGIOUS FIGURES. END NOTE).

17. (SBU) COMMENT: GIVEN THE DATE HOA RECEIVED THE INVITATION (AUGUST 14) AND THE DATE HE FILED HIS APPLICATION (AUGUST 21), IT IS DIFFICULT TO EXPECT HE COULD HAVE RECEIVED A PASSPORT AND STILL BEEN ABLE TO MAKE THE AUGUST 28-31 SESSION EVEN WERE HIS CASE NOT CONTROVERSIAL BECAUSE OF HIS RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION. GVN RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES IN HANOI ARE FAMILIAR WITH HOA. A FEW DAYS BEFORE POLOFF'S VISIT, EMBASSY SPOKE WITH NGUYEN THE DOANH, DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF THE VIETNAM GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS. DOANH DENIED THAT HOA HAD BEEN REFUSED A PASSPORT, WHICH IS TECHNICALLY TRUE, SINCE NO FORMAL REFUSAL WAS EVER ISSUED. END COMMENT.

18. (SBU) THE PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE ASKED HOA TO STATE WHETHER HE IS A MEMBER OF THE VIETNAM BUDDHIST SANGHA
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(VBS). (NOTE: NO RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION IS LEGAL IN VIETNAM UNLESS IT IS REGISTERED WITH THE GOVERNMENT. THE VBS, "OFFICIAL" UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION FOR VIETNAMESE BUDDHISTS, IS THE ONLY ONE WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALLOWED TO REGISTER. END NOTE.) HOA SAID HE REPLIED THAT HE IS NOT A MEMBER OF THE VBS, HE IS A MEMBER OF THE UNIFIED BUDDHIST CHURCH OF VIETNAM (UBCV), AN ORGANIZATION WHICH THE GVN DOES NOT ALLOW TO REGISTER. SINCE THAT TIME, HOA SAID, HE HAS HEARD NOTHING FROM THE PROVINCIAL AUTHORITY OR ANY OTHER GVN OFFICE ABOUT HIS REQUEST FOR A PASSPORT.

19. (SBU) ON AUGUST 25, HOA SAID, HE SENT AN E-MAIL TO SIR BAWA JAIN, CHAIRMAN OF THE MILLENNIUM SUMMIT, EXPLAINING THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD NOT YET ISSUED A PASSPORT AND ASKING JAIN TO INTERVENE. HE ALSO SENT

JAIN A COPY OF THE SPEECH HE INTENDED TO DELIVER TO THE SUMMIT. (HOA PROVIDED POLOFF WITH COPIES OF BOTH DOCUMENTS. WE DO NOT KNOW, AND HOA DID NOT STATE, WHETHER JAIN RECEIVED HIS E-MAIL, OR REPLIED). ON SEPTEMBER 2, HOA SENT A LETTER OF PROTEST TO NINE HIGH-RANKING VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT AND PARTY OFFICIALS, INCLUDING GENERAL SECRETARY LE KHA PHIEU, PRESIDENT TRAN DUC LUONG, PRIME MINISTER PHAN VAN KHAI, AND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SPEAKER NONG DUC MANH. COPIES WERE SENT TO NUMEROUS PROVINCIAL AND GOVERNMENT RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS OFFICIALS. THERE HAS BEEN NO RESPONSE OF ANY KIND TO THIS LETTER, SAID HOA.

ON AND OFF PHONE AND FAX CONNECTIONS

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110. (SBU) HOA SAID HE HAD BEEN INTERVIEWED IN RECENT DAYS ABOUT THE CASE BY PHONE BY THE VOICE OF AMERICA AND RADIO FREE ASIA. HE SAID AN INTERVIEWER FROM THE VOA'S ASIA DIVISION ALSO TRIED TO INTERVIEW HIM SEPTEMBER 7, BUT THE CALL WAS INTERRUPTED AND THE INTERVIEW NEVER TOOK PLACE. HOA BELIEVES GOVERNMENT SECURITY FORCES OBSTRUCTED THE CALL. HE BELIEVES SECURITY FORCES HAVE ALSO SOMETIMES JAMMED HIS FAX MACHINE. (NOTE: IN VIETNAM, THE VAGARIES OF INTERNATIONAL PHONE AND FAX SERVICE FREQUENTLY HINDER COMMUNICATION. END NOTE).
NOT THE FIRST TIME HOA PREVENTED FROM TRAVEL

111. (SBU) POLOFF ASKED WHETHER THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME HOA HAD BEEN PREVENTED FROM TRAVELING. "NO, IT HAS HAPPENED MANY TIMES," HE REPLIED. FOR EXAMPLE, HOA WAS INVITED TO A BUDDHIST EVENT IN LAOS OVER ONE YEAR AGO, HE SAID. HOA CLAIMED THE HUE RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES WOULD NOT ALLOW THE VISIT. LAST YEAR, HE SAID, HE WAS

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